

From: Mark Figlozzi
To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: Microsoft Settlement

The proposed Microsoft Settlement does not go far enough in attempting to stop Microsofts ongoing, anti-competitive behavior.

The danger Microsoft poses to consumers, the Internet, and our economy, has never been greater.

Truly, the browser wars are over. But critical new battles are being fought on new fronts. As a software engineer, I perceive that Microsoft is leveraging its Operating System monopoly to take control, and charge the Microsoft Tariff on all transactions, in three key areas:

1) STREAMING MEDIA.

Microsoft continues to leverage its Operating System monopoly to force its inferior (bundled) Windows Media Player on uneducated consumers, who will frequently use whatever the default is on their computer. New releases of Microsoft Internet Explorer frequently contain bugs that disable competing technology like Apples Quicktime. In fact, Microsoft has gone so far as to ELIMINATE browser plugins, forcing developers to scramble to release new versions of their competing media players which rely on Microsofts DirectX technology. This does not benefit consumers; it serves only to extend Microsofts monopoly. It forces creators of CONTENT online to license tools from Microsoft, rather than using free tools available elsewhere, to communicate their message. It implements a Microsoft tariff on all streaming media.

2) INTERNET STANDARDS & ONLINE TRANSACTIONS.

Microsofts new .net initiative strikes a dangerous blow against the concept of industry standards which made the Internet the massive success it has become. It undermines the HTTP protocol, and uses proprietary technology to

conceal data from engineers attempting to develop systems. As a software engineer who has worked with a variety of standards in network programming, I perceive that .net was not designed to assist consumers: It was designed SOLELY to ensure that Microsoft will get a little bit of money from every single transaction that occurs online. .Net extends the Microsoft Tariff to all web developers. The feature most cited by IT directors considering .net: it integrates with windows.

And most frighteningly of all:

3) NEWS AND CONTENT.

Operating System and web browser features implemented by Microsoft increase traffic to Microsofts MSN News Network.

For example, when a user enters an address to a web page that is no longer there, the HTTP Protocol (the universally-accepted protocol which powers the internet) calls for a message to be displayed which says Error: Page Not Found. But users of Windows XP have quite a different experience: Instead of displaying a standard error message, the newest version of Internet Explorer sends all viewers to a Microsoft Network Search Page. These search pages have links to News stories and other content within the Microsoft Network. By sending users of a web browser to a specific web page within its network, Microsoft is attempting to leverage its Operating system monopoly into the area of News and Content.

Additionally, Microsoft has created smart tags which will embed false links into NON-MICROSOFT websites, misdirecting consumers to Microsoft-sponsored content. This is equivalent to Sony embedding technology into television sets which inserts commercials for Sony CD Players during commercials for competing electronics products, or for Sony Pictures movies into news broadcasts about rival films. Microsoft has announced, but not yet shipped its Smart Tag enabled browser. Presumably, they will await the outcome of anti-trust actions.

Please do not allow Microsoft to extend its Operating System monopoly into News and Content publication. They have already demonstrated that they are not a trustworthy information source.

SECURITY ISSUES

Biologists teach us that the most secure ecosystem is a DIVERSE one. When viruses wipe out crops, money and lives are lost, but the human race lives on because we grow more than one variety of food: not all of our crops are susceptible to the same virus. The Internet, however, is increasingly dominated by one strain: Microsoft. Their track record on security is abysmal. This leaves us INCREDIBLY vulnerable to cyber attacks.

Please do everything in your power to ensure the safety of the Internet. Take stronger action against Microsoft. Protect competition in the free market. This is a crucial time and an issue of critical importance.

REMEDY

After my years in the technology sector, I have become convinced:

Allowing consumers the option to uninstall Internet Explorer, or to purchase a stripped down version of Windows will do VERY LITTLE to protect consumers, the Internet, and the ailing technology sector in general, from Microsofts illegal, anti-competitive practices.

The only way to stop Microsoft from leveraging their Operating System monopoly into other markets is to create Real Competition. And the only way to create real competition is to SEPARATE the Operating System developers from the developers of other software at Microsoft. This means BREAKING THE COMPANY IN TWO.

One action that would help alleviate the Microsoft Tariff is forcing the company to

publish and permanently open the file format for Microsoft Office documents, which have become ubiquitous in the business world.

Please take this unique opportunity to do more to help our struggling industry, caught between the recession and the choke hold of a determined monopolist.

Thank you for your time and hard work.

Sincerely,

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